
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE AND PROJECTIONS

INTRODUCTION

York County is located in the Virginia Coastal Plain on a peninsula formed by the James and York Rivers and the Chesapeake Bay. The Peninsula also includes James City County and the cities of Hampton, Newport News, Poquoson, and Williamsburg, all of which adjoin York County. The County and the Peninsula are part of the greater Hampton Roads region, which also includes the cities of Chesapeake, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, and Isle of Wight County. York County is also within the Norfolk-Virginia Beach-Newport News Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau.

The Census Bureau divides York County into ten Census Tracts for the purposes of data collection and reporting. The three northernmost Tracts (506, 507, and 508) encompass what is referred to in this plan as the upper County, while the remaining Tracts constitute the lower County. Within the County are several areas and communities that have no defined legal boundaries but whose general location is commonly known to the citizens. Foremost among these is historic Yorktown, which is the County seat and is located in Census Tract 505, as is the Lackey community, located along Old Williamsburg Road (Route 238) across from the Naval Weapons Station. The upper County, exclusive of the Naval Weapons Station, is often referred as the “Bruton (Magisterial) District.” Grafton, which is generally bounded by Goodwin Neck Road, Chisman Creek, Oriana Road, and the Poquoson River, includes Census Tract 503.02 and a portion of Tract 503.01. That portion of the County located south of the Poquoson Rivers and Harwoods Mill Reservoir is considered Tabb, which includes Tracts 502.01, 502.02, and the portion of Tract 503.01 south of Oriana Road. Other communities include Seaford (Tract 504.02), Dandy (in Tract 504.01), and Dare (in Tract 503.02).

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Population

York County is home to approximately 55,300 people and ranks seventeenth in population among the State’s 95 counties. In land area, however, York County is the third smallest county in Virginia, making it the sixth most densely populated county. The County’s population has been growing at a steady pace for the past several decades, but the 1990s have brought unprecedented rates of growth. According to the University of Virginia’s Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, York experienced the highest percentage increase in population from 1990 to 1998 in the metropolitan area and the ninth-highest of Virginia’s 140 counties and cities. York’s ranking among the state’s counties rose from 23rd to 20th, and among all localities from 35th to 30th.

Although resident births in York County were on the rise almost continually throughout the 1980s and early ‘90s while deaths remained fairly stable, the vast majority of the County’s population growth – approximately 90% - is due to net migration, which is the difference between the number of people moving *into* a community and the number moving *out*. Most of the growth, and most of the net migration, has taken place in the lower County, which offers more residential land with fewer development constraints than the upper County, where public utilities are not as widely available and the roadway network is more severely limited. An estimated 87%

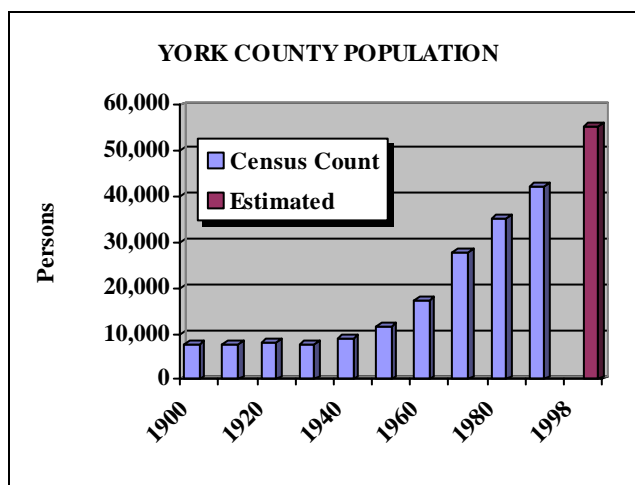
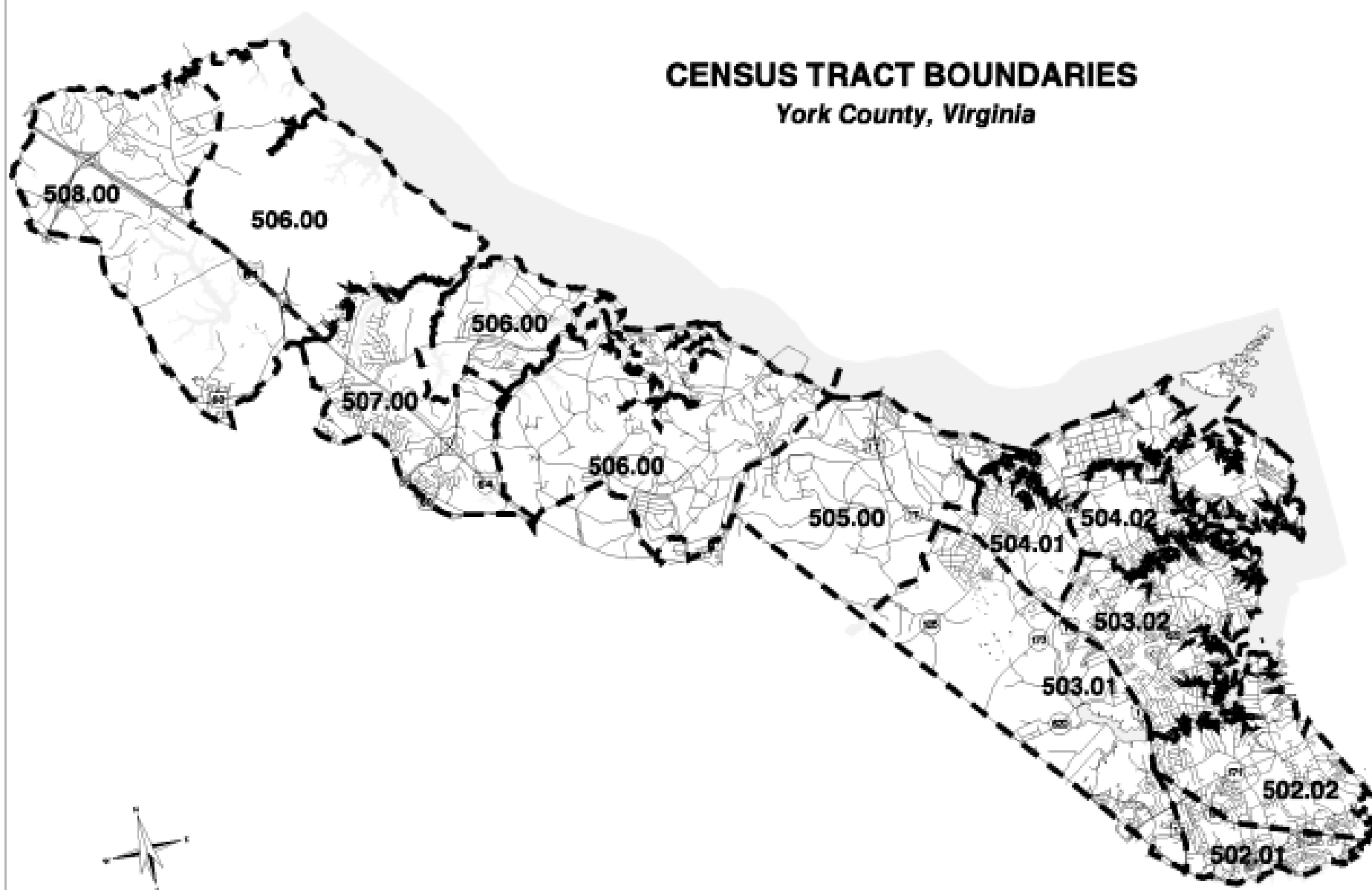


Figure 1

CENSUS TRACT BOUNDARIES

York County, Virginia



November 05, 1998
Prepared by York County
Computer Support Services

of the population growth in the County between 1990 and 1996 has been in the lower County, and of that 87%, over two-thirds has been in the Tabb area.

YORK COUNTY POPULATION AND HOUSING BY CENSUS TRACT 1980-1998							
Census Tract	General Area	1980		1990		1998	
		Housing Units	Population	Housing Units	Population	Housing Units	Population (Estimated)
502.01	Tabb	2,033	6,919	2,359	7,949	3,507	11,046
502.02	Tabb	938	2,877	2,138	5,781	3,149	8,354
503.01	Tabb, Grafton	997	2,792	1,341	3,296	2,727	6,880
503.02	Grafton, Tabb	1,931	5,794	3,200	8,708	3,726	9,831
504.01	Marlbank, Waterview, Dandy	841	2,332	1,094	2,989	1,251	3,344
504.02	Seaford	1,084	3,184	1,166	2,976	1,301	3,270
505	Yorktown, Lackey	924	2,963	867	2,130	931	2,239
Sub-Total	LOWER COUNTY	8,748	26,861	12,165	33,829	16,592	44,964
506	Military	232	1,383	262	1,234	262	1,234
507	Magruder/Penniman	1,630	4,844	1,805	4,711	2,291	5,923
508	Lightfoot, Skimino	791	2,375	1,052	2,648	1,244	3,138
Sub-Total	UPPER COUNTY	2,653	8,602	3,119	8,593	3,797	10,295
TOTAL	YORK COUNTY	11,401	35,463	15,284	42,422	20,389	55,259

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau (1980 and 1990 figures) and York County Planning Division (1998 figures)

Table 1

Age, Sex, and Race

The 1990 median age in York County was 32.8 years, four years older than it was in 1980 and nine years older than in 1970. The population is getting older, on average, as it is all over the country, because of the aging of the post-war baby boom generation born between 1946 and 1964 when fertility rates were remarkably high. The baby boom was followed by a “baby bust” period that brought lower fertility rates, causing a “bulge” in the age distribution of the population. Meanwhile, medical advances have increased the average life expectancy from 71 in 1970 to 75 in 1990, and the Census Bureau projects that it will increase to almost 78 by the year 2010. The cumulative effect of these trends has been to raise significantly the median age both in York County and nationally.

The racial composition of the County’s population has been fairly stable, with whites representing 81% of the population in both 1980 and 1990. Although the number of black residents increased from 6,118 in 1980 to 6,613 in 1990, the black proportion of the non-white population fell from 90% to 83% while the Asian population climbed from 4% to 12% of the minority population.

Households and Families

The vast majority of the County’s estimated 19,400 households are married-couple families, despite an increase in other types of living arrangements such as single-parent families, unrelated people living together, and people living alone. Families as a percentage of all households fell from 85% in 1980 to 82% in 1990, and married-couple families fell from 75% to 70% of all households.

This prevalence of married-couple families in York County is reflected in its relatively large average household size, which, at 2.90 persons per household, was the highest in the metropolitan area in 1990. This is partly attributable to the County’s large proportion of on-base military households living in housing, particularly

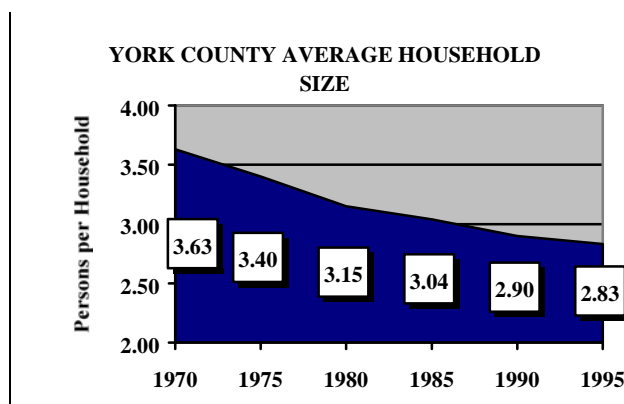


Figure 2

in Bethel Manor, built for military personnel with large families: the average household living on a military base in York County has 4.14 persons. For off-base households, the average household size is 2.76, which is still well above the statewide and metropolitan area averages of 2.61 and 2.69 persons per household respectively. Since 1990, the average household size is estimated to have fallen to 2.83 persons per household as the proportion of off-base households has grown.

Labor Force and Unemployment

York County's labor force grew by about 70% between 1980 and 1996, mostly as a result of continued population growth but also partly because of the increasing role of women in the work force. The labor force participation rate for women increased from 56% in 1980 to 62% in 1990. At the same time, the male labor force participation rate fell from 84% to 82%. As a result, women increased their share of the labor force from 38% in 1980 to 44% in 1990.

The military share of the County's labor force is shrinking, though not dramatically. As of 1990, there were 2,797 County residents serving in the armed forces. Although military personnel in the County increased in number by 12% between 1980 and 1990, the military's share of the labor force fell slightly from 14% to 12%.

This labor force is well educated. York County leads the metropolitan area and ranks third among Virginia's counties with 88% of its adult population holding at least a high school diploma. A third of these high school graduates have gone on to earn at least a bachelor's degree, and 12% of the County's adult residents hold a graduate or professional degree. The high level of education in the County is reflected in the types of jobs its residents hold. Over a third of the County's employed residents in 1990 held professional, executive, administrative, or managerial occupations.

York County has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the metropolitan area, and it consistently trails the regional, statewide, and national rates. In 1997, York County's average unemployment rate was 2.2%, while the jobless rate was 3.7% in the metropolitan area, 3.1% statewide, and 4.6% nationally.

Income

York County is one of the most affluent jurisdictions in Hampton Roads, with a 1989 median household income (as reported in the 1990 census) of \$40,363. York County was second in the metropolitan area to neighboring Poquoson. By 1996, the median household income had climbed to \$53,146, according to projections by the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service.

Between 1979 and 1989, the median household income in York County nearly doubled, but most of these income gains were eaten away by inflation. When adjusted for inflation, the \$19,447 increase in the median household income translated into a *real* increase of \$3,741, which was the second-largest increase on the Peninsula. Similarly, the \$12,783 increase in median household income that is projected to have occurred since 1989 represents an inflation-adjusted increase of \$1,473.

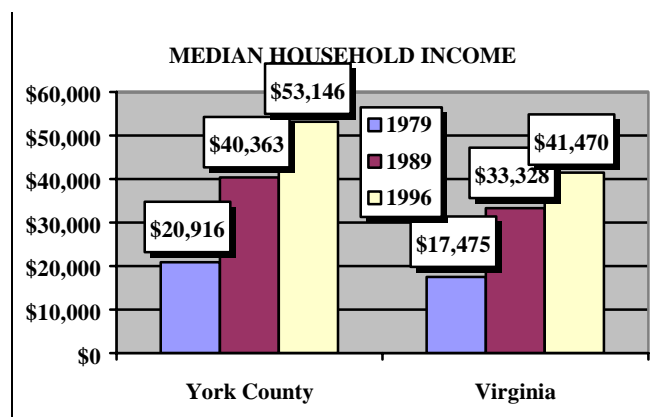
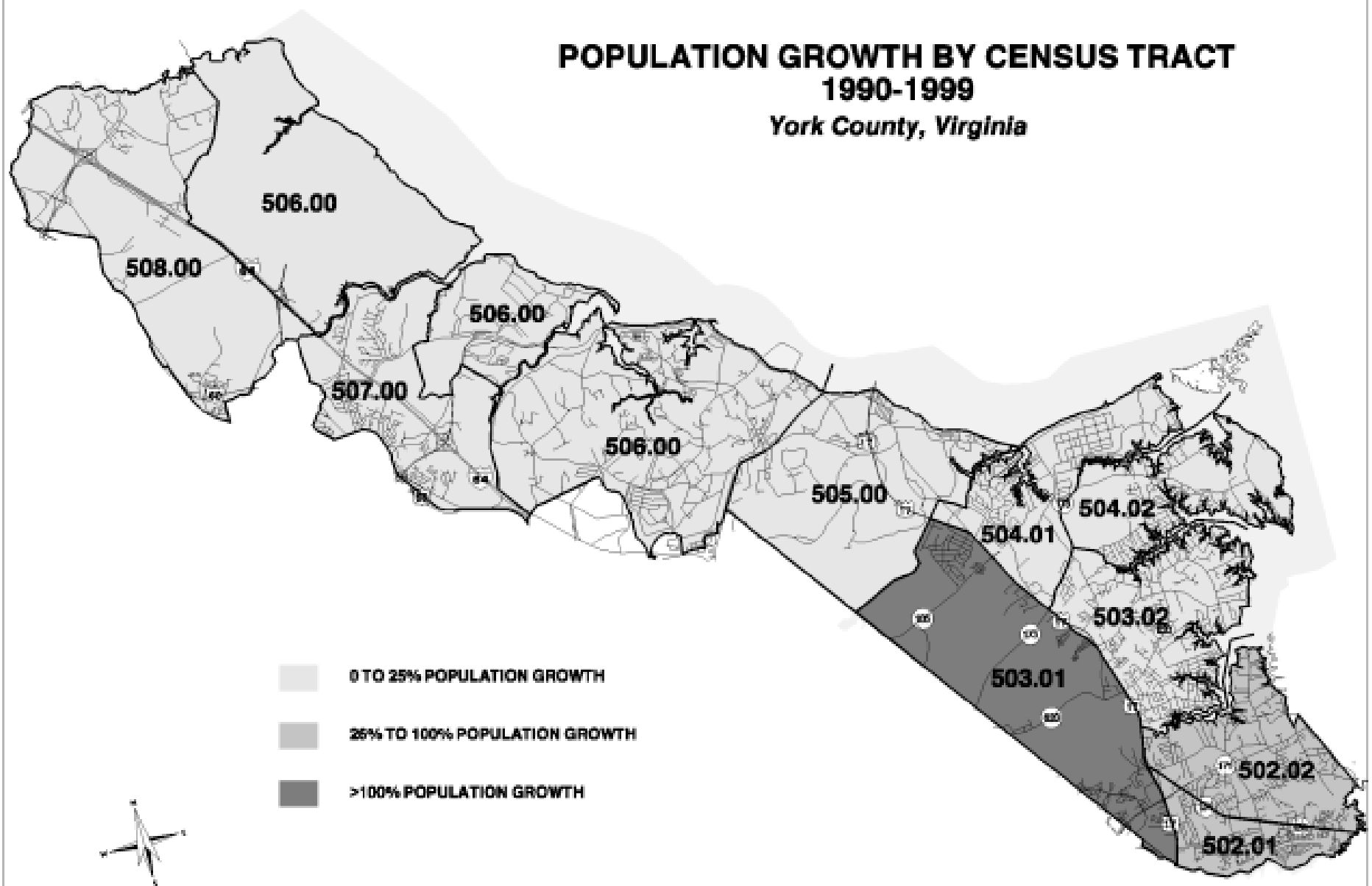


Figure 3

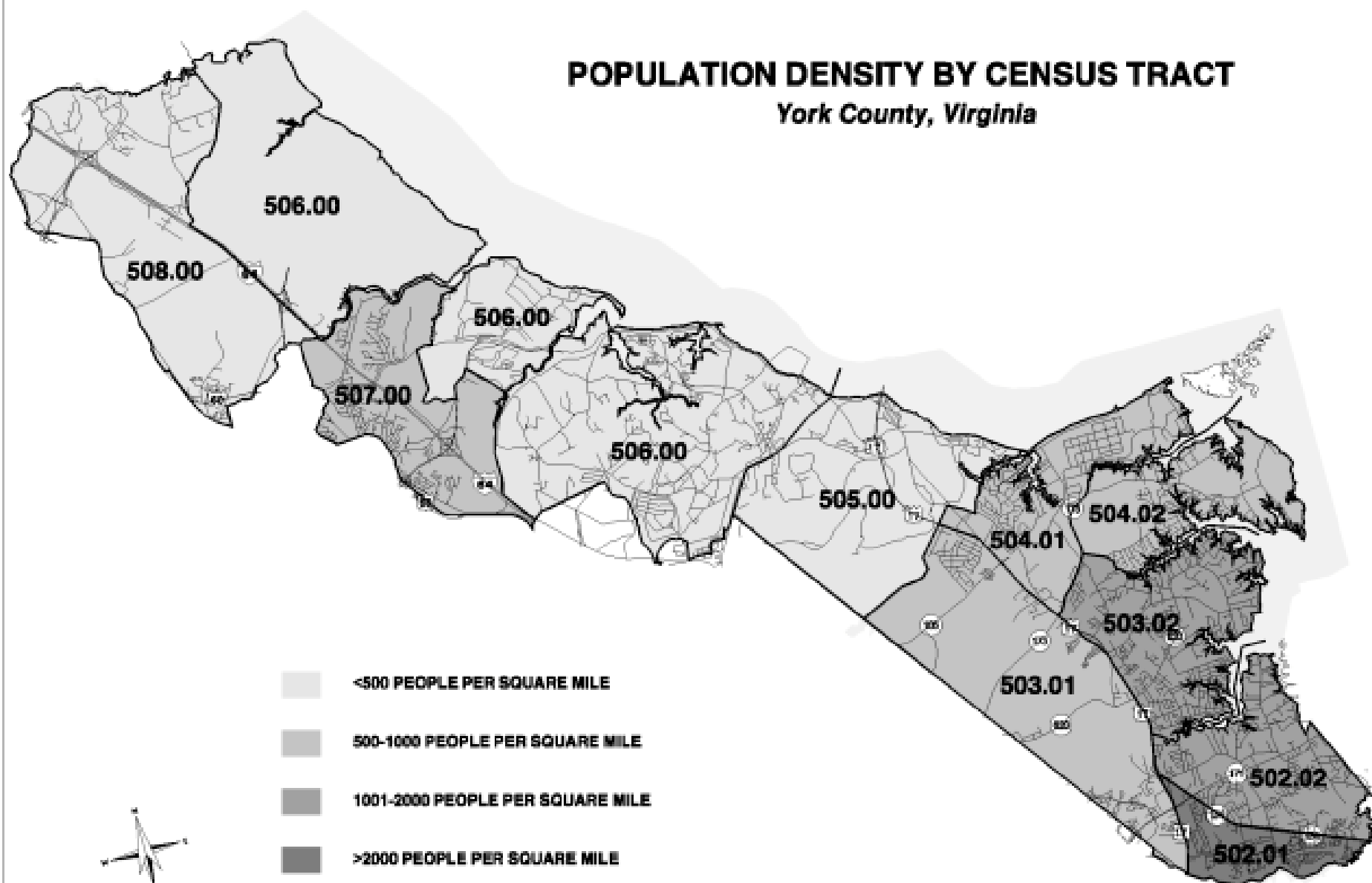
POPULATION GROWTH BY CENSUS TRACT 1990-1999

York County, Virginia



POPULATION DENSITY BY CENSUS TRACT

York County, Virginia



CHANGES SINCE 1991

Although the County has experienced significant growth since the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in 1991, the basic demographic profile of the County probably has not changed dramatically. Major demographic changes since 1991 are highlighted below:

- From 1991 to 1998, the County's population increased by 24%, from about 44,500 to 55,300.
- The percentage of County residents living in the lower County grew from 79.7% to 81.4% between 1991 and 1998.
- The average household size in the County has fallen from 2.90 persons per household in 1991 to an estimated 2.83 persons per household in 1998.
- The County's civilian labor force has grown from 20,000 in 1991 to 27,400 in 1998.
- The average annual rate of unemployment among County residents declined from 4.3% in 1991 to 2.9% in 1997 and continued to decline during the first half of 1998.
- The County's median household income rose from \$44,500 in 1991 to \$53,100 in 1996, which, when adjusted for inflation, represents an increase of almost \$1,400, or 4.2%.

POPULATION AND HOUSING PROJECTIONS

The population, housing, and school enrollment projections that appear in this plan were developed by the Forecast 2015 Committee, which was an ad hoc committee of citizens appointed by the Board of Supervisors in 1995 specifically for this purpose. Its report – entitled Forecast 2015 – and the projections contained therein were approved by the Board on January 17, 1996. The projection methodology that was used is described in Appendix A. (Readers who desire even more detailed information about the projections or the projection methodologies are encouraged to review the Forecast 2015 report.)

ACTUAL AND PROJECTED YORK COUNTY HOUSING UNITS AND POPULATION: 1990-2015						
Year	Upper County		Lower County		Total County	
	Housing Units	Population	Housing Units	Population	Housing Units	Population
1990	3,119	8,593	12,165	33,829	15,284	42,422
1995	3,519	9,490	15,164	40,840	18,683	50,330
2000	4,000	10,800	17,900	47,600	21,900	58,400
2005	4,500	12,200	21,000	55,400	25,500	67,600
2010	5,200	13,800	23,200	60,700	28,400	74,500
2015	5,900	15,700	23,700	61,800	29,600	77,500
Source: Forecast 2015: Report No. 1 of the 2015 Comprehensive Plan Review						

Table 2

Housing Units

It is projected that 9,200 new homes will be built in York County in the next twenty years. Over three quarters of this construction – 7,100 units – will take place in the lower County, which continues to offer a greater supply of residential land with fewer development constraints than the upper County. After 2005, however, the rate of housing growth in the lower County is projected to start slowing down as the continually increasing population density begins to enhance the relative attractiveness of the upper County, where housing construction is projected to continue at its present rate through 2005 and begin to accelerate thereafter. An additional 2,100 new units are projected in the upper County by 2015, expanding the housing stock by 55%. The housing stock is projected to grow by 43% in the lower County and 45% in the County as a whole.

The absolute increase in housing units tends to decline as the County approaches build-out because the cost of residential land rises as its supply falls, while increasingly the vacant land that remains has

constraints that limit its developability and thus reduce the number of units per gross acre. As a result, land is increasingly difficult to develop and development is less and less profitable; hence the rate of new housing construction declines.

Population

With the projected construction of over 9,000 housing units, York County's population is projected to continue growing at a high rate for the next twenty years, reaching 58,400 in the year 2000, 74,500 in 2010, and 77,500 in 2015 (see **Table 2**). Three quarters of this growth will be in the lower County, where the population is projected to increase by over a third (17,000 residents) between 1998 and 2015. In the upper County, an additional 5,400 residents are projected by 2015, representing an increase of one-half from its current population.

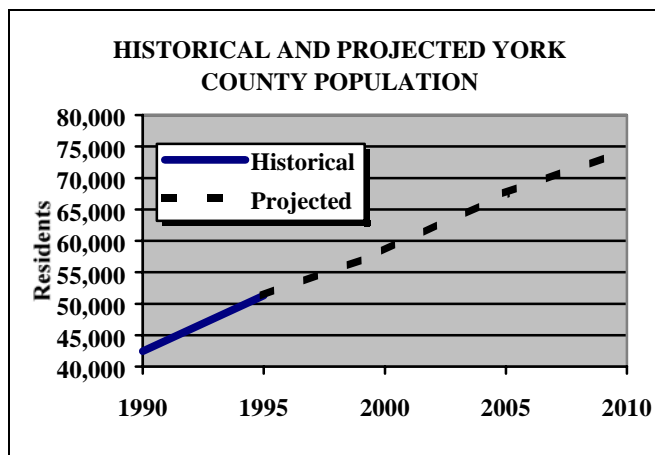


Figure 4

Figure 4 illustrates these population projections graphically. With consecutive increases of 16,000 residents each, the 1990s and the decade that follows will dwarf all previous decades in terms of population growth. Not until after 2010, when the supply of developable residential land in the lower County is projected to have been almost fully depleted, will population growth begin to taper off. By 2015, it is projected that the County as a whole will have reached 90% of its residential build-out capacity.